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WEEKEND NOTES

The House of Dreaming - Perth Festival

by **Carolyn H** ([subscribe](#))

I'm a local mother and mature-age student living in Perth, Western Australia. I have a love for nature-based activities, the arts and creative, fun activities for children.

The Perth Arts Festival isn't just for the grown-ups

As a young child did you enjoy creeping through your home at night, marvelling at how your safe, familiar world had morphed into something completely different and perhaps even a bit scary? Were you intrigued by the mysterious lives of strangers when you caught glimpses of them through illuminated house windows, as your family drove through the streets at night? Or perhaps you had a grandmother or other family member who had a rambling old house, chock-a-block full of weird, wonderful and old-fashioned goodies? Childhood is a magical time when the world is fresh and new to us, and our imagination is alive and fertile. When a flight of fancy can easily transform even the most mundane object into something completely different and exotic, such as a fairy, dragon or zombie.

During the Perth International Arts Festival this year, Melbourne's Arena Theatre Company will be presenting *The House Of Dreaming*, a wonderful interactive production suitable for children from approximately five to eight years old, which has been likened to a journey through a three-dimensional storybook. Inspired by children's innate playfulness and the infinite richness of their imagination, the sleeping house dreams of days long gone by, conjuring memories inspired by its past in an exciting labyrinth of hidden passages, upside-down rooms and exotic bric-a-brac, with many more surprises at every turn. Live performers, projections and robotics further enhance the interactive experience, and children will love the fact that everything within reach can be touched and explored. They even get to dress up in costumes and receive a magic talisman to protect them during their journey. To learn more, check out [this information](#) on the Arena Theatre Company website.

A theatrical production in the form of an installation, *The House Of Dreaming* is sometimes compared to a giant, life-sized doll's house. However, unlike most theatrical performances, rather than being an 'audience', guests become active participants in the story. While generally children enter the house in groups of three, leaving adults behind in the waiting area, this is an arrangement which is flexible, if participants don't feel comfortable with it or children are very young. Special performances for school groups can also be arranged, and teachers' resources are available to enhance these visits. For more information, read the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on the Arena Theatre Company's website.